

Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Markup of the DOTCOM Act
June 10, 2015

(As Prepared for Delivery)

The Energy and Commerce Committee has built an impressive bipartisan record of success these last few years and it is something that we can and should all be proud of. The American public expects Congress to work together, and we have the results to show for it. Today, we will build upon that record, and I am especially pleased that we were able to reach agreement on an issue of such incredible importance – the future of the Internet. Because of the hard work and negotiations between Chairman Walden, Mr. Shimkus, and Ranking Member Pallone, we are here to consider a bipartisan agreement that will maintain the appropriate oversight role of Congress as the administration moves forward with the proposed transition of the U.S. government's role in the domain name system to the Internet community at-large.

Though we have supported the multi-stakeholder community from the beginning, our support cannot and should not be blind. We must ask the hard questions to ensure that we are taking the responsible route to a successful transition. I applaud the work of NTIA, ICANN, and the multi-stakeholder community to come up with guidelines for an acceptable proposal. But that can't be the end of the work. We have an important role to play before the transition is complete. The bipartisan amendment we're considering today supports U.S. efforts to work within the multi-stakeholder system and to report to Congress when the community has adopted a plan that meets the criteria for a successful transition. This will further the long-standing commitment of the United States to an open global Internet and is consistent with Congress' role as NTIA's oversight authority.

The future of the Internet is important to the entire world, and the United States has shepherded it from its humble government roots to its modern role as the global hub of communication and commerce. As we consider this momentous decision, we must exercise the utmost care.

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